

Citation: Dr Barbara Rosemary Hardy AO

15 April 2010, 2:30pm

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Dr Barbara Hardy AO .

Dr Hardy is being admitted to the degree of Doctor of the University honoris causa for her distinguished creative contributions in the service of society.

Barbara Hardy is the Patron of the University of South Australia's Barbara Hardy Centre for Sustainable Urban Environments (in the Division of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment).

She was born in Adelaide, attended Woodlands Girls' School and studied science at the University of Adelaide, majoring in chemistry (1947).

In the 1970s she began voluntary work with the Conservation Council and spent five years at Flinders University studying the Earth Sciences (1974 – 1979). She also assisted David Wotton (Liberal MP for the SA electorate of Heysen from 1975) when he was Shadow and then Minister for the Environment in the late 70s and early 80s. Following this period, Dr Hardy resigned from the Liberal Party so that her environmental activism could be non-party based.

She has been a Commissioner of the Australian Heritage Commission, President of the National Parks Foundation of South Australia (now the Nature Foundation SA), Founding President of the Investigator Science and Technology Centre, and Chair of the South Australian Landcare Committee.

From 1992 – 1998 she served as a Director of the Australian Minerals and Energy Environment Foundation; and from 1993 – 1996 she was a Board Member of the SA Research and Development Institute.

Barbara Hardy was appointed an Officer of the General Division of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1987 and an Honorary Doctor of the Flinders University in 1993. She received an Advance Australia Award in 1991, a SA Great Award in 1992, an Institution of Engineers Medal in 1992, and an ABC Eureka Award for the Advancement of Science in 1994. She was named SA Citizen of the Year in 1996. She is also a Companion of the Institution of Engineers Australia and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Energy.

From 2001 - 2006 she served as the Member from Australia in the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED), a major international project initiated and funded by the Japanese Ministry for Environment. (APFED aims to propose a model of equitable and sustainable development for Asia and the Pacific Region.)

In 2009 she became patron of UniSA's Centre for Sustainable Urban Environments: The Barbara Hardy Centre. Her major interests are in ecologically sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, environmental valuation, renewable energy production and use, and business and industrial matters, as they affect the environment.

Also in 2009, Dr Hardy received a distinguished alumni award from the University of Adelaide in recognition of her lifelong commitment and significant contribution to the advancement of Science Education, Science Awareness and Environmental Conservation.

I am very pleased and proud to present to you Chancellor, for admission to the degree of Doctor of the University honoris causa — Dr Barbara Hardy.

GRADUATION ADDRESS

Ceremony 9, Faculty of Faculty of Sciences
15 April 2010, 2.30pm, Bonython Hall



SPEAKER: Dr Barbara Hardy AO

Awarded Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*)

Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor,

President, Distinguished Guests,

Members of Staff,

AND ESPECIALLY GRADUATES

I am extremely honoured to have this opportunity to speak at this very important University of Adelaide Graduation Ceremony. I graduated from this University in 1947, majoring in Chemistry, and that provided for me a respected basis upon which to venture into the world to try to earn an income, and to gain huge satisfaction from what I was able to do.

I worked in the CSIRO in the Soils Division out at the Waite Campus for a number of years, then married, had four sons, and some time later returned to study at the Flinders University, which was near my home, studying the Earth Sciences/Geology.

I live at Seacliff, and had had the good fortune to meet a famous geologist, Sir Douglas Mawson, during the early 1950s. I was only 19, and had no idea that he was famous, but now look back and think how lucky I was to meet him. At that time he would have been lecturing in geology at the University of Adelaide.

I was also fortunate much later in my life, at the age of 80 years, to have the opportunity to visit Antarctica. It was at that time when I was doing a lot of reading and study about Antarctica, its geology and its icy coasts and central plateau, that I began to read quite a lot about Mawson. I have now decided that he is one of my heroes!

Mawson did most of his early study at the University of Sydney, but in 1905 the University of Adelaide appointed him as lecturer in mineralogy and petrology, then from 1921 until his retirement in 1952, as the Professor of Geology and Mineralogy.

Mawson was a geologist with broad interests. Observation and collection in the field was what he liked to do. He was a pioneer in the study of radioactive minerals in Australia, identifying and naming a new radioactive mineral, davidite, from Radium Hill in South Australia. As a student he undertook the first major survey of the geology of the New Hebrides (Vanuatu). He was awarded a doctorate for research on the Olary-Broken Hill region, where he found evidence of past ice ages and became particularly interested in the effects of glaciers. He later developed a major interest in the geology of the Flinders Ranges, and undertook extensive fieldwork in the area with his university students.

But Mawson really became famous as the result of his work and his expeditions to Antarctica in the early 1900s.

He was part of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) 1911-1914. He led the expedition, leaving from Hobart in the ship "Aurora" and sailing to Antarctica, where he set up a Main Base in Commonwealth Bay at Cape Denison, known as the "home of the blizzard" because of the extreme winds.

During that time he, and two of his colleagues, Xavier Mertz and Belgrave Ninnis, ventured out on the ambitious Far Eastern Sledge Journey of exploration, using dogs to pull the sledges. Tragedy struck when Ninnis fell through a snow bridge into a crevasse. He was lost with most of the food and some of the dogs.

Mertz died later from malnutrition and the poisonous effects from eating dog liver, leaving Mawson alone, and over a hundred miles from Main Base. He cut the sledge in half using his pocket knife as it was too heavy to pull alone. He was losing the soles of his feet, and had to bind them on using six pairs of socks.

It took him a month to reach Main Base only to find that the ship back to Australia had just left before he arrived, so he had to spend several more months in the iciness of Antarctica. However, he eventually returned home to South Australia, and spent much of his remaining years at the University of Adelaide.

Mawson's great resilience, perseverance and determination are really what got him through. It was a huge achievement and a great challenge.

No one knows in their early life what challenges may lie in the future.

But a good education, studying a discipline that they really are interested in, will give people great opportunities for fulfilment and success in their future life.

I want to heartily congratulate all graduates, and offer you my very best wishes for the future, in the hope that you will all have the opportunity to meet and to make the most of all the challenges that may lie before you.

Well done!

Barbara Hardy

Graduate of the University of Adelaide